

Ambition's lofty views, the pomp of state,
 The pride of wealth, the splendour of the
 great,
 Stripp'd of their mask, their cares and troubles
 known,
 Are visions far less happy than thy own.

The lesson of life, in tale after tale of his, is
 simply to
 forget romance and accept reality; one of
 his heroines
 will deliberately school herself out of an
 unwise passion:

I sought my remedies for these;
 I suffer'd common things my mind to please,
 And common pleasures; seldom walk'd alone,
 Nor when the moon upon the waters shone;
 But then my candles lit, my window closed,

And in one year—nay, ere the end of one—
 My labour ended, and my love was done.

How sensible, and successful; and yet what a
 sad success,
 though not without its dignity! But such
 success was not
 to be Crabbe's own. He could not always
 draw his own
 curtains so firmly against the moonshine's
 lure. At sixty
 he was to woo a girl. In consequence, his
 view of life,
 despite his stoicism and his humour,
 remains intensely
 sad:

Ah, world unknown! How charming is thy
 view;
 Thy pleasures many, and each pleasure new!
 Ah, world experienced, what of thee is told?
 How few thy pleasures, and those few how
 old!

His landscape lies under a grey light, very
 different from
 the dappled sunshine in Miss Austen's
 morning-room.

Perhaps women are less often pessimists—or
 passionate
 pessimists—than men. Madame Ackermanns
 are rare.
 Crabbe has his English faith in the ultimate
 goodness of
 God, as a sort of universal Landlord, rather
 absentee, who
 can be trusted to behave like a decent
 Englishman when
 the final audit comes. But this life,

meanwhile, is not gay
to watch. It is not the high tragedies that
are hardest to
bear: they come seldom, and he does not
write of those.